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FM AMCONSUL PESHAWAR
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7836
INFO RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE 4611
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE IMMEDIATE 1754
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI IMMEDIATE 1761
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE 1396
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE 1030
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE 0792
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RHMFISS/FBI WASHINGTON DC
RHMFISS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL
RHMFISS/CDR USSOCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUMICEA/USSOCOM INTEL OPS CEN MACDILL AFB FL
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TAGS: [PTER](#) [MOPS](#) [PGOV](#) [PK](#)

SUBJECT: IMPROVING RESPONSES TO MILITANT ATTACKS NEAR PESHAWAR

REF: 08 ISLAMABAD 3944

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REASON: 1.4 (a), (b), (d)

Summary

¶1. (C) Recent attacks in Khyber Agency and Peshawar, including the destruction of a bridge, indicate that militants are still trying to disrupt U.S./NATO supply routes through Pakistan to Afghanistan. In contrast to late last year, when security forces were slow or failed to respond to attacks, we are seeing some encouraging and welcome signs, particularly from the police, of a more rapid response to violence. End summary.

Bridge Rapidly Repaired After Militants Destroyed It

¶2. (C) Engineers from the 11th Corps of the Pakistan Army installed a new bridge after militants blew up the previous one on February 3. Traffic was temporarily halted while officials repaired the bridge in what observers hailed as record time but resumed on February 7. The mission's Narcotics Affairs Section (NAS) provided the 40 meter pre-fabricated steel bridge, imported from Germany and already in Pakistan, to the Pakistan Army.

¶3. (SBU) The British-era Ali Masjid Bridge, constructed of iron in 1923, was one of the oldest on the Pak-Afghan Highway, approximately halfway between Landi Kotal and the Torkham border crossing. Four single lane RCC (Reinforced Cement Concrete) bridges are on the route between Jamrud and Landi Kotal. Because these bridges consist of single lanes, heavy traffic jams frequently develop. NAS plans to convert all four bridges to standard double lane bridges, 40 meters in length.

Security Repels Militant Attack on Cargo Terminal

¶4. (C) In the predawn hours of February 7, militants attacked the truck convoy terminal at Ring Road with rockets, petrol bombs and small-arms fire. In sharp contrast to attacks in December when security forces failed to respond (reftel), this time the cargo terminal security guards stood their ground, exchanged small-arms fire with the militants. Police who had

received a tip off about a possible attack on the terminal were ready and responded promptly, scattering militants and bringing in a fire brigade to mitigate damage.

Increased Security Measures For Terminals

15. (C) The Khyber convoy route, as well as the Ring Road and Bilal terminals, continues to be targets in recent attacks as the terminals in Peshawar can hold up to 350 trailers. The terminal managers have taken measures to increase security, improve response time to incidents, and decrease the time-in-storage by stepping-up the dispatching of cargo and encouraging the use of terminals outside the NWFP.

Comment

16. (C) The rapid rebuilding of the Ali Masjid bridge on February 7 and the successful repelling of a militant attack on a cargo terminal in Peshawar the same day are early but welcome signs of the government's determination to keep the coalition trucks safe and moving. While militant attacks are likely to continue, rapid police response and successes are undoubtedly a boost to police morale.

TRACY